The Leadership Factor in African Policy Reform and Growth

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Abstract

In 1997 the World Bank's two vice-presidents for Sub-Saharan Africa attributed a significant improvement in Africa's growth prospects to the advent of a new generation of leaders, replacing their "once largely statist and corrupt" predecessors. This paper begins by tracing the evolution of African chief executives over the past two decades. Of 48 holding office on 1st January 1999, 22 were in power a decade earlier and eight already ten years before that. Examination of ten countries, with focus on Kenya and Zambia, raises the question: why, after these incumbents had presided over economic catastrophe, were socio-political structures unable to replace them with better leaders? A review of leading treatments of the political economy of economic reform highlights the dichotomy between interest-group analysis, *versus* studies that accord a major role to the unpredictable advent of individuals with qualities that, by promoting policy reform, help launch their countries onto paths of rapid growth. Given the multitude of problems facing most African countries, even leaders of extraordinary ability and "vision" would find it difficult to guide them rapidly through the required reforms. However, a few concrete steps on the leadership's part to raise agricultural production and promote export of labor-intensive manufactures would greatly increase the prospects for accelerated growth. The paper challenges other social scientists to tell us more about how African social structures can create power bases for "visionary" individuals. In addition, can donors and other outsiders help nurture "visionary" leaders who will promote rather than hinder growth and development? Apart from withholding support from, and even active opposition to, corrupt incumbents, many options exist for helping the former implement reforms. Assisting them to gain power, while a desirable goal, is more problematic.

Keywords: Leadership, policy designs and consistency, policy objectives and coordination, structure and scope of government.

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In a 1997 article beginning, “Africa is on the move”, the World Bank’s vice-presidents for Africa,[1] Callisto Madavo and Jean-Louis Sarbib (MS), cite the “greater social stability and freedom from armed conflict” that has improved Africa’s economic prospects. Central to this, they argue, is the replacement of a “once largely statist and corrupt” African leadership by a “new model (that) is no-nonsense, accountable pragmatism…(The) new generation of African leaders (is) committed, qualified, and nonideological.”[2]

These assertions raise four questions that we address in this paper:

1. How significant has been the change in leadership of African countries over the past decade?
2. What is the role of leadership as a factor in determining an African country’s prospects for improved economic policy and consequently accelerated and sustained economic growth?
3. If leadership is a significant factor in improved policy and better growth prospects, what are the preconditions for it to play a more positive role than it has in the past? and
4. What further steps might be taken by concerned observers, both in- and outside the continent, to enhance the effectiveness of African leaders in promoting policy change leading to more rapid growth?

The next section tabulates the change in chief executives across Africa between 1979 and 1999, and traces the pattern of national leadership in a subset of countries. It pays particular attention to Kenya and Zambia, countries with which one or the other author has had prolonged contact. Section II begins by reviewing the treatment of leadership in the recent literature on policy reform, in Asia and Latin America as well as Africa.

Section III examines hypotheses about steps that African governments could take to accelerate economic growth, and considers the role of leadership in implementing those measures. Section IV addresses questions 3 and 4 above by depicting the issue of socio-political preconditions that stimulate constructive leadership as a puzzle and a topic worthy of future research. It then considers how outsiders might enhance the role of leadership in African growth and development. Section V summarizes and concludes.

In order to relate our discussion to the socio-political context, and yet come to grips as rapidly as possible with the issue of national leadership and economic growth in Africa, we relegate to an annex some gleanings from the literature on general concepts of leadership.

I. Recent evolution of national leadership in Africa

Table 1 lists the chief executives of 48 African countries as of January 1, 1979, 1989 and 1999. In 22 countries the same individual was in power on the two latter dates, in eight of these

[1] This paper uses “Africa” to refer to Sub-Saharan Africa.
[2] Madavo and Sarbib (1997), page 111.

cases he (the list contains no women) held power already 20 years ago. The stability of national leadership is noteworthy, raising the question as to where MS find a new generation of leaders.[3,4] Moreover, the presence of 26 new leaders since 1989 does not automatically mean that MS' old model has given way to their new one, nor does a leader's perseverance rule out the possibility that a formerly statist and corrupt posture has yielded to one of "accountable pragmatism".

The authors have spent significant periods of time in countries where in our view the quality of the chief executive's leadership and its evolution (or nonevolution) have had a major impact on policy change and hence, growth and development. We feel it appropriate to appraise at least partially the MS thesis in those and a few other countries that have recently been the focus of international attention.

Table 1. Country Leader as of January 1st

Country	1979	1989	1999
Angola	Agostinho Neto	Jose Eduardos dos Santos	Jose Eduardos dos Santos
Benin	Gen. Mathieu Kerekou	Gen. Mathieu Kerekou	Mathieu Kerekou
Botswana	Sir Seretse Khama	Sir Quett Ketumile Joni Masire	Festus Mogae
Burkina Faso	Sangoule Lamizana	Capt. Blaise Compaore	Blaise Compaore
Burundi	Jean-Baptiste Bagaza	Pierre Buyoya	Pierre Buyoya
Cameroon	Ahmadou Ahidjo	Paul Biya	Paul Biya
Cape Verde	Aristides Pereira	Aristides Pereira	Antonio Mascarenhas Monteiro
Central African Republic	Jean-Bédel Bokassa	Gen. André-Dieudonné Kolingba	Ange-Félix Patassé
Chad	Lol Mohamed Shawa	Hissene Habre	Gen. Idris Deby
Comoros	Ahmed A. Abderemane	Ahmed A. Abderemane	Tajiddine Ben Said Massounde
Congo (Zaire)	Mobutu Sese-Seko	Mobutu Sese-Seko	Laurent Desire Kabila
Congo, Rep.	Denis Sassou-Nguesso	Denis Sassou-Nguesso	Denis Sassou-Nguesso
Cote d'Ivoire	Felix Houphouet-Boigny	Felix Houphouet-Boigny	Henri Konan Bedie
Djibouti	Hassan Gouled Aptidon	Hassan Gouled Aptidon	Hassan Gouled Aptidon
Equatorial Guinea	Fransisco Macias Nguema	Brig.Gen.Theodoro Obiang Mbasogo	Theodoro Obiang Mbasogo
Eritrea	-----	-----	Isayas Afewerki
Ethiopia	Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam	Col. Mengistu Haile Mariam	P.M. Meles Zenawi [1]
Gabon	El Hadj Omar Bongo	El Hadj Omar Bongo	El Hadj Omar Bongo
The Gambia	Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara	Sir Dawda Kairaba Jawara	Yahya Alphonse J. J. Jammeh
Ghana	Frederick Akuffo	Flt. Lt. Jerry John Rawlings	Jerry John Rawlings
Guinea	Ahmed Sekou Toure	Brig.Gen. Lansana Conte	Lansana Conte
Guinea-Bissau	Luis Cabral	Gen. Joao Bernardo Vieira	Joao Bernardo Vieira
Kenya	Daniel T. arap Moi	Daniel T. arap Moi	Daniel T. arap Moi
Lesotho	King Moshoeshoe II [2]	King Moshoeshoe II [3]	King Letsie III [4]
Liberia	William Tolbert	Master-Serg. Samuel Kanyon Doe	Charles Taylor
Madagascar	Lt.-Comm. Didier Ratsiraka	Comm. Didier Ratsiraka	Didier Ratsiraka
Malawi	Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda	Dr. Hastings Kamuzu Banda	Dr. Bakili Muluzi
Mali	Lt. Moussa Traore	Moussa Traore	Alpha Oumar Konare
Mauritania	Moustapha Ould M. Salek	Col. Maaouya Ould S. A. Taya	Maaouya Ould Sid Ahmed Taya

[3] MS do not explicitly limit their assessment to country chief executives. Other prominent individuals can have a major impact on economic policy and its outcomes. The justification for confining our analysis to chief executives is threefold: in most countries they constitute the single locus of leadership with the greatest potential for good or harm; as a rule they set the tone for the national administration; and, finally, descending to the next nominal level would hopelessly complicate the analysis.

[4] A tabulation of chief executives who either held military rank before assuming power, or accorded themselves such rank (other than commander-in-chief) once in power, yields the following count: 1979: 12; 1989: 19; 1999: 11. In section IV we raise the question as to how far donors' military aid may have augmented the military's role in government.

Mauritius	P.M. Sir S. Ramgoolam [5]	P.M. Sir Aneerood Jugnauth [6]	P.M. Dr. Navinchandra Ramgoolam [7]
Mozambique	Samora Machel	Joaquim Alberto Chissano	Joaquim Alberto Chissano
Namibia	-----	Sam Nujoma (1990)	Sam Nujoma
Niger	Lt.Col. Seyni Kountche	Col. Ali Saibou	Ibrahim Bare Mainassara
Nigeria	Gen. Olusegun Obasanjo	Gen. Ibrahim Babangida	Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar
Rwanda	Maj.Gen. Juvenal Habyarimana	Maj.Gen. Juvenal Habyarimana	Pasteur Bizimungu
Sao Tome and Principe	Manuel Pinto da Costa	Manuel Pinto da Costa	Miguel Trovoada
Senegal	Leopold Sedar Senghor	Abdou Diouf	Abdou Diouf
Seychelles	France-Albert Rene	France-Albert Rene	France-Albert Rene
Sierra Leone	Siaka Probyn Stevens	Maj.Gen. Joseph Saidu Momoh	Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
Somalia	Gen. Muhamed Siad Barre	Gen. Muhamed Siad Barre	-----
South Africa	Balthazar J. Vorster	Pieter W. Botha	Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela
Sudan	Col. Jaafar Mohammed Al-Nimeiri	Ahmed Ali Al-Mirghani	Omar Hassan Ahmed Al-Bashir
Swaziland	King Sobhuza II	King Mswati III [8]	King Mswati III [9]
Tanzania	Julius Nyerere	Ali Hassan Mwinyi	Benjamin William Mkapa
Togo	Gen. Etienne Gnassingbe Eyadema	Gen. Etienne Gnassingbe Eyadema	Gen. Etienne Gnassingbe Eyadema
Uganda	Gen. Idi Amin Dada	Yoweri Kaguta Museveni	Yoweri Kaguta Museveni
Zambia	Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda	Dr. Kenneth David Kaunda	Frederick Jacob Titus Chiluba
Zimbabwe	P.M. Ian Smith [10]	Robert Gabriel Mugabe	Robert Gabriel Mugabe

Notes:

[1] President: Negaso Gidada
[2] P.M. Leabua Jonathan
[3] P.M. Justin Lekhanya
[4] P.M. Pakalitha Mosisili
[5] Governor: Sir D. Bawenchobay
[6] President: Sir V. Ringadoo
[7] President: Cassam Uteem
[8] P.M. Obed Dlamini
[9] P.M. Sibusiso Dlamini
[10] President: Josiah Zion Gumede

Military title of the head of government has been omitted if the government is considered civilian.

MS rightly refer to "freedom from armed conflict" as a prerequisite for social and economic progress. That currently rules out a subset of African countries from potential applicability of the MS improved-leadership hypothesis—notably Angola, both Congos, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, Somalia, and Sudan, accounting for 90 million people or 15% of Africa's population in 1996.[5] It also raises questions about the set of countries intervening in the Congo (DRC) civil war that broke out after MS' article was written, namely Angola (Strike Two!), Namibia, Rwanda, Uganda, and Zimbabwe. And finally, one must mention countries that are engaged in armed conflict—Eritrea and Ethiopia—or where a warlord having prevailed in armed conflict has a tenuous hold on power, notably Liberia.

The following review focuses on Kenya and Zambia, the cases best known to the authors from personal experience, and concludes with brief remarks about eight other countries.

Kenya. This country showed early potential as a star of African development. Quality of leadership has much to do with its ongoing failure to realize that potential. There is little point in dwelling on the shortcomings of president Daniel arap Moi. Much of the blame for saddling Kenya with this chief executive, now over 20 years in office, belongs with Kenya's founding father, Jomo Kenyatta, who made the then (as of 1966) light-weight Moi his vice-president so as to keep more eligible successors in their place. Under the Kenyan constitution it was up to the National Assembly to ratify the succession or choose another president within 90 days of Kenyatta's death; the Assembly chose not to rock the boat.

[5] Tabulated from World Bank (1998a), pp. 12-14 and 33.

It is more controversial to assert that Kenyatta set in motion, or tacitly encouraged, a chain of events that imposed two crippling burdens on the Kenya economy. Firstly, it was under Kenyatta that corruption took on a macroeconomic dimension through the volume of resources siphoned out of public coffers, via the Treasury as well as the central bank. Secondly, it was in his day that bribery by foreign contractors and machinery suppliers, and acceptance of those bribes by Kenyan politicians, launched a plethora of inefficient state enterprises. Oriented overwhelmingly oriented towards import substitution, these enterprises continue to burden Kenya with an inefficient industrial structure that impedes its entry into export markets.[6]

In essence, Kenyatta saw his role as that of a traditional chief, maintaining political stability, distributing benefits to the population within the resource constraints defined by his finance ministry, and not begrudging his ministers (or his family) a larger share in the public purse than would accrue to them through any politically acceptable direct compensation. Had Kenyatta—well in advance of his time—anticipated the steps by which some nations that were poor in the 1960s and 1970s have subsequently become fast-growing, newly industrializing countries (NICs), there is little doubt that he had the political clout to restrain his rent-seeking ministers and make the necessary policy improvements. But this was not the development paradigm of the era, and it is hard to discern any circumstances under which Kenyatta could have acquired such a vision.

The scene now shifts to the early 1990s, when the outside world had forced Moi to reintroduce multi-party politics in the election ultimately held in December 1992. Moi was now discredited and unpopular in virtually all urban areas, a fact reflected in his receiving only 36 percent of the popular vote, even though it was enough to win reelection. Three men split all but 2 percent of the remaining votes. Two of these, a Kikuyu and a Luo, represented factions of the Forum for the Restoration of Democracy (FORD) that had registered as a single party one year before. The third candidate led the Kikuyu-dominated Democratic Party. Their shares of the popular vote were 26 percent, 18 percent, and 19 percent, respectively.[7]

Who were these men? One, a businessman and one-time cabinet minister under Moi, had suffered a stroke while in political detention and spent the year before FORD's formation recuperating in Britain. He remained visibly handicapped. The Luo, a one-time vice-president, was believed to be in his eighties, and died within two years of the election. The third candidate, also an ex-vice president and trained as an economist,[8] was widely viewed as having compiled an undistinguished record in various government posts, and also implicated in large-scale bribery, *inter alia* in connection with a sugar project that burdened the economy with heavy losses.

Moi doggedly held power for the next five years, weathering a sharp spurt in inflation (from 19% in 1991 to 46% in 1993) caused by Treasury and central bank leakages orchestrated by his associates. The most bizarre of these was a special export bonus, moved in the National

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[6] Gray watched from a close vantage point as Kenyatta's last white cabinet minister, Bruce Mackenzie (Agriculture), inaugurated Kenya's macro-corruption learning curve by soliciting and taking German bribes for a government sugar project.
[7] Electoral data from EIU Country Profile: Kenya, 1997-98
[8] In the 1960s he was widely described as one of the very few persons, if not the only one, to have graduated from Makerere University College (Kampala) with a First in economics.

Assembly by the then finance minister (and simultaneously vice-president), for a shipment of gold jewelry that turned out to be sand on inspection by Swiss customs (the so-called Goldenberg scandal). Kenya's average per capita economic growth rate during the five years 1993-97 was zero.[9] In the December 1997 election Moi won 40% of the votes, prevailing over an opposition that was even weaker the second time around.

The authors accept that public choice theory and other analyses of the political economy of reform in Kenya have much to say about why Daniel arap Moi persists, and all the reforms imposed by the donor community have not to moved Kenya onto a sustainable growth path. Nonetheless, the foregoing account raises questions about the quality of Kenya's leadership, both incumbent and opposition, and whether counterfactual circumstances can be imagined, bringing about leadership that would have enabled Kenya to realize a significant portion of its economic potential during the past generation.

Zambia. Quality of leadership has much to do with this country's fall from its status as Africa's third richest nation in 1972 to twenty-fifth in 1996.[10] Kenneth Kaunda, like Jomo Kenyatta the father of his country, was Zambia's undisputed leader for 25 years. His end as president was signaled by an attempted *coup* in 1990, and widespread public celebration over the prospect that he had, at last, been dislodged. Following a constitutional amendment ending the one-party state, the Movement for Multi-Party Democracy (MMD) defeated Kaunda and his United National Independence Party (UNIP) in the elections of October 1991, generally regarded as peaceful and fair.

The transition was peaceful as well. Incoming president Frederick Chiluba was widely feted, locally and abroad, as a democrat and a man of courage and conviction. His early speeches conveyed determination to rebuild the economy and repair Zambia's fractured society. The donor community, convinced of Chiluba's commitment, responded immediately and lavishly.

However, within months of the new administration taking office, one of Chiluba's most respected ministers resigned, citing high-level corruption. Subsequently, the government declared a state of emergency over an alleged UNIP plot (the "zero option" scheme), and this overreaction—none of the alleged conspirators was ever convicted—led to the departure of several key ministers at the forefront of Zambia's economic reforms.[11]

Chiluba's foot-dragging in response to a 1993 donor ultimatum to remove known drug-runners from Cabinet, as well as his lack of action on reports by the Anti-Corruption Commission, raised questions about his willingness to deal with "governance" issues.[12] His commitment to "transparency" also rang hollow when the government refused to release the

[9] Published statistics put it at 0.14% p.a., differing insignificantly from zero given data errors.
[10] World Bank (1998a), pages 12-14 and 32-22.
[11] The zeal with which alleged UNIP conspirators were prosecuted contrasts with government's inaction *vis-à-vis* the "black mamba" terror campaign during the run-up to the 1996 elections. Widely believed to be MMD-sponsored, this escapade led to several deaths.
[12] Prior to his appointment the foreign minister had been denied entry to Germany for drug-related activity.

official report on a Zambia Air Force plane crash in Gabon that killed the national soccer team. Dismissal of the deputy minister of mines for urging speedy privatization of the copper mining parastatal, ZCCM, exposed Chiluba's lack of support for reform in this vital sector.[13]

Perhaps the key event symbolizing Chiluba's failed leadership was the way he steered a constitutional amendment through Parliament to disqualify his predecessor from standing in the 1996 election.[14] The donor community was unequivocal in its opposition, and Chiluba repeatedly promised that the constitution would not be changed. In the event, Kaunda was ruled ineligible and UNIP boycotted the election, leaving MMD to win all but three seats. Thus, within two elections, Chiluba and MMD had *de facto* recreated a one-party state. Notwithstanding this advantage, they have nonetheless failed to manage the economy effectively.

The pace (and even direction) of policy change deteriorated from early 1995. With accelerated inflation and debt, along with plummeting foreign reserves, aggravated by massive ZCCM losses, Zambia is now in a worse position than before MMD and Chiluba came to power. Kaunda, for all his failings, did not allow the mining sector to collapse. Opening Parliament in January 1999, Chiluba apologized to the Zambian people for his government's mistakes and the lack of economic progress.

Like Kenya and many other African countries, Zambia provides fertile ground for testing hypotheses about the interplay of interest groups and its impact on the acceptance and implementation of economic reform.[15] But it also raises the question as to whether and under what circumstances the quality of the national leadership might have been different, and what impact that might have had on economic performance.

Benin. This is one of three francophone nations[16] where a single chief executive appearing in all three columns of Table 1 led his country's economy into a statist trap while expounding Marxist rhetoric. In each case, this individual spent a period in the early 1990s out of power but has recently regained it (in Benin and Madagascar, via democratic election). The Marxist overtones have gone, but effective leadership in extricating the economy from stagnation has yet to appear.

Botswana and Mauritius. As the two African countries regularly cited as long-standing cases of successful economic policy, these had no need of a new generation of pragmatic, accountable leaders. Both have recently seen smooth transitions of national leadership, Botswana in 1998 and Mauritius in 1995, and their economies continue to perform well. Average per capita GDP growth rates during 1990-97 were 2.2 percent and 4.0 percent, respectively.

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[13] This was reinforced by Chiluba's hiring of ZCCM's disgraced former chief executive to lead the negotiations for its sale. Though the history of this episode has yet to be unraveled, the costs to the country of delay and foregone investment run into the billions of dollars.

[14] The grounds for excluding Kaunda were that he was born in Malawi, and had already served two terms as president. Ironically, there is strong evidence that Chiluba himself was born in the former Belgian Congo.

[15] In this connection see Bates and Collier (1993), upon whose theses we comment in the next section.

[16] The other two are Congo-Brazzaville and Madagascar.

Congo-Brazzaville. President Sassou-Nguesso (SN) has deposed his elected successor in what is generally viewed as rivalry over distribution of the country's petroleum resources.

Uganda. This country may be the leading illustration of MS' hypothesis—in any case, the World Bank's posture is one of (qualified) satisfaction with its economic performance. President Museveni held power already in January 1986 from which time he was widely praised for his enlightened stewardship. Therefore, describing him in 1997 as one of the "new" generation of African leaders appears to stretch the point.

Madagascar. In 1975, Admiral Philémone Ratsiraka ousted Madagascar's first post-independence president, a corrupt French puppet. In the ensuing statist quagmire, Madagascar's average per capita GDP growth during Ratsiraka's tenure (1975-91) was *minus* 2.4 percent per annum.

In 1991, mass demonstrations spearheaded by students forced Ratsiraka into exile in France. The subsequent elections brought Albert Zafy into power in 1993. Average per capita GDP growth is measured at –1.4 percent during 1992-96. Zafy's stormy administration ended in July 1996 with his impeachment by the National Assembly. A presidential election was held later that year, with the two frontrunners in a field of a dozen or so candidates qualifying for a December run-off. Those two were none other than Messrs. Ratsiraka and Zafy. Ratsiraka won the runoff with 50.7 percent of the vote.

Can conditions be imagined under which alternative leaders without the sorry records of Messrs. Ratsiraka and Zafy might have emerged in 1996 and challenged those two successfully for the presidency? Perhaps not, but the question points to the essence of the leadership issue in Madagascar (and indeed Africa as a whole). Where are these alternative leaders, and what changes are needed in the present systems to foster them?

Tanzania. Very likely another MS case in point. Founding father Julius Nyerere, president during 1961-85, certainly falls in MS' categories of ideological and statist, even if he has never been accused of corruption or lack of commitment. In any case, during his tenure Tanzania regressed severely.

Nyerere's successor, Ali Mwinyi is generally seen as a failure. Benjamin Mkapa, who succeeded Mwinyi through multiparty elections in 1995[17] has been widely regarded as a major improvement. Later, we consider Tanzania as a case offering unrealized potential for active leadership to accelerate growth.

Implications. The foregoing account raises the question: why, after long-surviving leaders had presided over such economic decline, were the extant socio-political structures unable to generate conditions that would replace them with, to use MS' terms, accountable, pragmatic, committed and qualified new leaders?

[17] Notwithstanding, Nyerere's old CCM took 80% of the seats in Parliament.

II. Leadership as a factor in policy reform and growth

Applying variants of the Great Man Theory of History to policy reform

An extreme variant of the view that national leadership is instrumental in improving policy and accelerating economic growth is the "Great Man Theory of History". In an African context, this would require the emergence of leaders who (a) are motivated to launch their countries onto an acceptable growth path—sustained increase in per capita GDP of, say, at least 4 percent per annum—and (b) have the charisma and other qualities required to impose their development agenda in the face of vested interests and voter inertia. Yet, according to the Theory, such leaders emerge as random events over which the outside world, including the international financial institutions (IFIs) and others, can have little influence.

In its most simplistic form, the Theory asserts that the course of history (or at least major segments of it) is determined by the random appearance of charismatic leaders, who rally as much political support as they require from interest groups and a population at large to move the economy forward.

Before adapting the Great Man theory to the question of policy reform and growth in Africa, it is helpful to (i) review alternative hypotheses about the factors underlying adoption and nonadoption of reforms leading to accelerated growth, and then (ii) consider what role Great Men (or Women) have played in the NICs, i.e. East Asian tigers (first and second waves), Latin America (starting with Chile), and, finally, Africa.

Perhaps the most systematic effort to analyze the implementation of policy reforms representative of the "Washington consensus" is the Institute for International Economics' conference volume, *The Political Economy of Policy Reform* (Williamson 1994). In a summary chapter, Williamson and Haggard (WH) review 15 hypotheses about pre-conditions for sustained reform, of which three relate to this discussion: namely, that economic reform requires (1) a "visionary" leader, (2) a coherent economic team, and/or (3) a "technopol" (economist-politician) as leader of the team.

WH find that none of the conditions investigated, including these three, was necessary or sufficient for reform. The 13 countries researched for the IIE conference, none of them in Africa, present at least one "partial counterexample" for every hypothesis.[18] However, WH single out three hypotheses, including the aforementioned (1) and (2), as receiving "quite strong support." The third is that reform requires a strong political base, specifically in the form of legislative support (this condition was not significant in countries with nondemocratic systems; Poland is presented as the sole democratic exception).

WH cite a second tier of three hypotheses as receiving sufficient corroboration to merit being "borne in mind by any reform-minded leader." These assert that chances of sustained

[18] Fourteen countries are the subject of papers: (Australasia) Australia and New Zealand; (the "European periphery") Spain, Portugal, Poland and Turkey; (Latin America) Chile, Mexico, Colombia, Brazil and Peru; (Asia) Indonesia; and (economies in transition) Ukraine, Russia and Bulgaria. No paper is devoted specifically to Korea, but that country is reviewed in the summary.

reform are enhanced by (1) an environment of economic crisis, (2) a new administration's "honeymoon" *vis-à-vis* public opinion, and (3) presentation of a "comprehensive program" of reform.

When do leaders merit the characterization "visionary"? According to WH, they must be "executives with strong commitment, a vision of where they would like their countries to go (even if this [is] not always combined with any clear sense of how to get there), and a willingness to take risks." Somewhat apologetically, they cite ***Chile***'s Pinochet as an example, describing his "vision of a Chile fundamentally transformed [which he] was willing to pursue regardless of the costs."

In a volume concerned exclusively with Africa (Ndulu & van de Walle (NW), 1996), Gyimah-Boadi and van de Walle (GBW) place the strongest theoretical emphasis on leadership of any work reviewed for this article. They assert:[19]

> All of the factors identified as key to the success of economic reform in the recent literature are, in fact, dependent on effective political leadership. These include the government's level of understanding of economic issues, its commitment to reform, the insulation of key technocrats, and its ability to build coalitions on behalf of reform.

In a companion piece in NW, Brautigam highlights institutional issues, notably the weak implementation of reform by national bureaucracies, and offers little hope of rapid improvement. Both leaders and followers, she says, "are ensnared by the politics of patronage." Leaders rule through "patrimonial ties rather than rational-legal norms…Rapid expansion, frequent 'shuffling' of personnel, and political instability have…thwarted efforts to develop a bureaucratic culture…"

Brautigam believes that "committed leaders can work within the kind of state-society linkages found in patrimonial governance systems, if they concentrate first on reforming a small number of critical agencies," e.g. the central bank, tax service, and/or judiciary. However, she does not address the preconditions for committed leadership to emerge in a given country, nor suggest how outsiders might enhance the probability of this happening.

Asia. In a volume that otherwise accentuates interest group theory (Bates & Krueger, 1993), Haggard, Cooper & Moon (HCM) distinguish their explanation of ***Korea***'s economic success from "standard" accounts which, in their view, "account [neither] for the comprehensiveness of Korea's reforms, nor for their coherence and credibility." Instead, HCM "place particular weight on the political power of the executive under [Presidents Park and Chun], and their efforts to legitimate their rule through economic growth." They continue:

> Executive power served several functions. First, it permitted the government to cut through previous patterns of rent-seeking both within and outside the bureaucracy. Second, it eliminated from the economic policy agenda contending policy platforms that have affected the nature of economic policy-making in a number of other developing countries, often through harsh repression of opposition that was justified by national security concerns. Finally, executive power infused government deliberations in general and the determination of economic actions in

[19] NW (1996), p. 228.

particular with an urgency and an authority that they might not otherwise have had, in part by concentrating decision-making authority within the government itself.

Latin America. Denying that "successful economic policy in developing countries is…the product of pure forces of history"—i.e. an outcome of interest group interplay—Harberger (1993) asserts:

> Far from it, in every case about which I have close knowledge, the policy would in all likelihood have failed (or never got started) but for the efforts of a key group of individuals, and within that group, one or two outstanding leaders.

Harberger's purpose is to "pay tribute to a small number of such leaders." The paper

> …provide(s) some idea of the special traits that have made these particular people essential to the modernization processes of their nations' economies. Campos [***Brazil***—planning minister] the forthright "doer of his duty," oblivious to the personal cost to him. Vegh Williams [***Uruguay***—finance minister] the artful and imaginative sapper, who knew just where to set the explosive charge to demolish the old system, and who took charge of the construction and much later of the defense and perpetuation of a new, liberalized system. De Castro [***Chile***—finance minister], whose exclusive leadership traits defy description but remind me more than anything of some great athletic coaches, whose mere presence inspires team members to superhuman efforts and incredible sacrifices. Büchi [Chile—finance minister], the most "modern man" in the group, with the technical know-how to capture in his own mind the workings as well as the flaws of an entire system of national economic policy, whose motto could well be that one should look to intimate knowledge of a problem to find the key to its solution. Aspe [***Mexico***—finance minister], who presided over one of the most careful, most artful, most extensive, and to date most successful programs of privatization that the developing world has seen and who had the discipline and fortitude to ensure the prudent use of the proceeds. Gil Diaz [Mexico—undersecretary, revenue], who comes as close as anyone to being the architect of Mexico's reformed and modernized tax system, and who led a massive administrative reform, including the most concentrated fight against corruption that I have ever witnessed. But for each of these people, the history of his country would be different.

Harberger pays a final tribute to "the great achievements and indomitable courage" of ***Argentine*** economics minister Domingo Cavallo, whose reforms were then (1993) still in process.

The country paper in Williamson-Haggard making the strongest case for the primacy of visionary leadership, Piñera on ***Chile***, distinguishes "real leaders" from politicians. His plea: "Surely among those strong-willed enough to struggle their way to high political power are some who are also strong-willed enough to fight for a principle."[20]

In the Bates-Krueger volume, Grindle and Thoumi (GT 1993) give great weight to leadership in ***Ecuador***. According to them, "much of the content and timing of policy changes can be understood by viewing them from the perspective of leadership by policy elites."[21] Three successive Ecuadorian presidents had firm ideas about what policy changes were required to

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[20] Williamson (ed.) (1994), p. 231.
[21] BK (1993), page 159.

resolve the country's economic crisis. However, the political resources available to them severely limited their ability to implement the changes.

GT apply interest-group analysis to explain the opposition confronted by the reformers. The net outcome was "a decade of muddling toward adjustment". GT surmise the Ecuadorian chief executives may have increased the amount of "muddling" by "disregarding the problems of sustainability and choosing not to engage in greater consensus building prior to making decisions".

Africa. Turning to Africa, Gyimah-Boadi & van de Walle list several African ministers as leaders of "technocratic change teams," wielding authority that was delegated from the respective heads of state.[22] The authors note that when these ministers lost that support, the reforms typically lost momentum. What of prospects for the future? GBW's answer:

> The question is how new political and economic values can be engendered among African leaders…There is no clear answer…, since idiosyncratic national factors necessarily play a critical role in the career of any political leader…Perhaps creating and mobilizing individual leaders of the kind that social science cannot predict will be necessary to put Africa on the path of rapid growth…Nonetheless, we should not expect more than slow progress towards the developmental state in the near future.[23]

In other words, Africa needs some Great Men (or Women), whose emergence cannot be predicted.

An alternative view: Interest group theory

We view the doctrine frequently labeled "interest group theory" as offering the greatest contrast to the Great Man Theory in explaining policy change. Editing a 1993 anthology entitled *Political and Economic Interactions in Economic Policy Reform*, Bates and Krueger (BK), who are also the authors of its summary chapter, minimize the role of leadership. They explicitly dismiss the "unitary actor model" in favor of interest group theory.[24] Their index omits "leadership".

The chapter in BK devoted to Zambia, authored by Bates and Collier, highlights the dichotomy between Great Man and interest group analysis. We return to this below.

Writing in 1996 for the *Journal of Economic Literature*, Rodrik provides "an economist's perspective on the political economy of policy reform." He cites the finding by WH on "visionary leadership", but the thrust of his analysis is an economist's variant of interest group theory. For Rodrik the primary questions are (1) why institutions for compensating losers from reform are not more common and effective, and (2) how it is—short of attributing myopia to the

[22] One of them, former Ghana finance minister Kwesi Botchwey, is now our colleague at HIID.
[23] NW (1996), pages 229, 232.
[24] BK (1993), page 455. The volume gives eight country cases: Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, Egypt, Ghana, Korea, Turkey and Zambia.

population, which he dismisses—that the preponderance of public opinion rejects policies that evidence from many countries shows will accelerate growth and make a large majority better off.

Rodrik finds the first question puzzling and in need of further research. For the second question he presents scenarios whereby uncertainty about the identity of the winners and losers leaves enough voters or interest groups with expected losses to turn the tide against reform.

East Asia. Specifically for this region, Rodrik accords a major role to the "top political leadership". There he argues that the absence of powerful industrial and landed interest groups, and comparative equity in income distribution, freed the leaders to concentrate on expanding rather than redistributing the pie, and to this end, on "supervis[ing] the bureaucracy closely and mak[ing] sure that the bureaucrats assisted rather than hindered private entrepreneurship".[25]

Africa. Applying interest group theory to ***Zambia***, Bates and Collier (BC 1993) start by characterizing president Kaunda as "strong" and "possessing a wide range of discretion". He "dominated the process of policy making". It was he "who secured the adoption of the [1985] reform program." He alone supported it in the UNIP Central Committee (CC), and was joined only by the finance minister and central bank governor in supporting it in Cabinet.

Yet, "the backing of only the president and his technocrats was not sufficient to guarantee [the reforms'] maintenance." UNIP's core constituency was urban consumers and state-owned enterprises. Party bureaucrats watching out for those interests believed that price inflation of urban wage goods had been aggravated by market-oriented reforms, and could be restrained by controls, including administered foreign exchange and interest rates. Conversely, agricultural, industrial and other interests benefiting from policies that strengthened production incentives, were marginalized by UNIP.

Certainly these insights are valuable and well documented. But the question remains: was it excluded that Kaunda would remain steadfast, accept the arguments of the finance ministry and central bank economists, and either override the opposing consensus of the CC and Cabinet, or use his power to restructure UNIP, giving greater weight to producer interests?

According to Bates & Collier, facing "widespread political discontent and mounting political opposition to his policies", Kaunda changed his policy team, replacing government bureaucrats and advisers committed to policy reform with a group close to the Party and its CC. But apparently this was not a solely opportunistic move; BC also tell us that Kaunda "wanted an appreciated exchange rate and thus, *by his lights*, a lower rate of inflation."[26] Evidently, Kaunda's mind had been changed. We are not told to what extent by introspective reflection, and how far under the influence of Party ideologues.

In any case, Kaunda's stance here raises the issue of leadership. Notwithstanding what BC call "the structure of political competition" in Zambia, one can imagine a leader of Kaunda's seniority and influence recognizing the damage done to the economy on each of the four

[25] Rodrik (1996), p. 21.
[26] BK (1993), page 414. Emphasis added.

previous occasions when he abandoned reform efforts.[27] If that experience was too close to home to internalize, he might have taken seriously evidence that by 1987 had accumulated in most parts of the world in support of liberalization. In the event he did not do so, the economy went into a tailspin, and food riots in June 1990 focused for the first time on the political system, touching off a chain of events that culminated in 1991 in Kaunda's ouster.

BC's analysis stops as Zambia's Second Republic (Kaunda) nears its end. We look forward to a sequel by one or both of those authors interpreting Kaunda's ouster, and UNIP's eclipse by MMD, in terms of shifts in the configuration of interest groups. We wonder, however, whether interest group theory is as relevant to the poor performance of the Chiluba administration as an analysis seeking the causes of incompetent and corrupt leadership. For instance, is it useful analytically to treat drug- and gun-runners, and the asset-strippers who fostered ZCCM's ruin, as an "interest group"?

Turning to Rodrik's questions—compensation of losers and rejection by public opinion. Both are clearly relevant to Africa[28] as illustrations of economic mismanagement by authoritarian governments.

For question (1) we suggest the hypothesis of deficient leadership—i.e. a "visionary leader" would be alert to the rationale for compensating losers and would promote appropriate institutions. With respect to question (2), "public opinion" in Africa has an amorphous character—popular perceptions are heavily influenced by state-owned and manipulated media. Cannot one imagine the accession of African leaders with sufficient vision about their economies, buttressed by a history of local failures and decades of positive experience in East Asia, Latin America, even Mauritius, to assert the primacy of economic growth over the reticence of timorous voters?

III. How can "visionary" leadership accelerate growth in Africa

A recent paper by senior officials of the International Monetary Fund provides a familiar catalog of policy improvements needed to accelerate growth in a typical African economy. In "Africa: Is This the Turning Point?", Fischer, Hernández-Catá and Khan (FHK 1998)[29] give as first priority raising the rate of private investment. To achieve this, and thereby raise productivity and growth, they list eight conditions. In the course of structural adjustment programs supported by the IMF and the donor community, most African countries have, say FHK, registered progress in fulfilling each of the conditions. However, the threshold of sustained growth has not yet been crossed, and in most countries, more remains to be done on each point.

The eight conditions are:

- Maintaining a stable macroeconomic environment;

[27] The occasions in question occurred in 1977, 1979, 1980 and 1983.
[28] Africa does not feature in Rodrik's analysis. He mentions it only once.
[29] Fischer is the Fund's First Deputy Managing Director, Khan is director of the Fund Institute, Hernández-Catá is associate director of the African Department.

- "Far-reaching improvements in **governance** to avoid capricious interference with private activity and to develop and maintain a transparent and stable legal and regulatory environment",[30] thereby reducing investors' risks;
- Trade liberalization;
- Privatization;
- Civil service reform;
- Banking reform;
- Liberalization of the agricultural sector; and
- Improving labor market flexibility and competitiveness.

FHK nowhere refer explicitly to quality of leadership—perhaps this is too much to expect of an institution that has to tread a fine line between advocacy and diplomacy. However, we find the quality of leadership to be implicit in FHK's reference to improved governance, and in a separate statement that sustaining the recent rise in Africa's growth "depends on whether policymakers take the requisite actions."

FHK's conditions amount, they admit, to a "long agenda". Gyimah-Boadi & van de Walle warned us earlier not to expect rapid progress. Brautigam finds institutional weaknesses so deep-seated that she wants policy makers to focus initially on reforming just a handful of agencies. We agree with her, but will propose here an even narrower short-term agenda, comprising a handful of steps that we believe might jump-start the growth process, and that should be feasible even if requiring "committed" or "visionary" leadership of the sort that, unfortunately, few African countries enjoy at the moment.

The authors are staunch members of the school advocating—we claim no originality here—that no African economy can accelerate and sustain growth without following some variant of the Asian model that accelerated growth in the agricultural sector while reorienting activity towards the global economy and initiating export of labor-intensive manufactures.[31] On the other hand, we do not belong to the *laissez-faire* branch of this school (if indeed it still exists), which used to be paraphrased as saying, "get the prices right and investment and exports will follow." On the contrary, we accept the lessons of countries such as Korea, Malaysia and Singapore that strategic intervention by the national leadership can engage and energize domestic entrepreneurial talent, increase an economy's attractiveness to foreign investors, and help make entry into export markets profitable.

Illustrations from three African countries

What kinds of strategic intervention would be useful in Africa? Here we turn to experiences from three African countries, one of which (Mauritius) has taken off economically, while the other two (Senegal and Tanzania) are still languishing.

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[30] FHK (1998), p. 19 (emphasis in original). One may reasonably interpret this condition as also forestalling capture of regulatory instruments by private interests.
[31] Lindauer & Roemer (1994) is just one close-to-home work out of many on this theme.

Earlier we saw figures illustrating ***Mauritius***' progress during 1993-97. Its turnaround is usually traced to 1972, following a decade of negative per capita GDP growth. During 1972-97 this rate averaged 4.3%, the highest of any African economy.[32]

The main impetus came from the inauguration of an export-processing zone (EPZ) in 1971. The story is that then prime minister Ramgoolam was induced to try this approach by a local businessman of Chinese origin who, upon visiting Taiwan, saw his uncle enriching himself in such a zone. EPZ privileges in Mauritius—notably tax concessions and duty drawbacks on imported inputs—were not confined to industries located in government-sponsored industrial parks. While the prime minister was no Park Chung Hee or Lee Kwan Yoo, he and his successors made it their business to see that the bureaucracy did not "capriciously interfere" (à la FHK) with the fledgling textile and garment manufacturers. The rest is history.

Of all France's ex-colonies in Africa, ***Senegal***, through the metropolis of Dakar and its sea- and airports, is most strategically situated to thrust itself into the global economy and export manufactures to the European Union, starting with the ex-metropole. Except for intermittent rebellion in the far south (Casamance), the country has been politically stable since early colonial days, while partial macroeconomic stability has been assured through the West African Economic and Monetary Union, with its fixed exchange rate and France's veto power over central bank credit to government.[33]

Senegal has long aspired to energize its manufacturing sector, and through a New Industrial Policy introduced in 1986 with IFI urging and funding, tried harder than any other franc-zone country to offset the drag of an overvalued exchange rate that was finally halved (relative to the French franc) in January 1994. The Policy included duty drawbacks for imported inputs; an export bonus, which ultimately collapsed under fiscal pressure; and a bitter tussle with the trade unions to stem wage inflation.

In 1997, the French fashion magazine *Elle* featured a French model wearing shoes made by a Senegalese artisan. According to Senegal's trade and industry minister, shortly after the magazine appeared, a French distributor requested several thousand pairs.[34] The minister hurriedly contacted representatives of the shoe trade and the banking sector, only to be told it would be impossible to mobilize the craftsmen and obtain the necessary finance by the allotted deadline. It was with a sense of disappointment and frustration, according to the minister, that he had to decline the order.

What has this to do with policy leadership? Suppose Senegal's president, inspired by the Park Chung Hee/Lee Kwan Yoo example, had previously made clear to his cabinet and other senior aides that expanding Senegal's manufactured exports was the nation's No. 1 economic priority, such that *inter alia* any relevant opportunity, or obstacle that threatened its realization, should be brought to his immediate attention. Could he not have established an emergency task

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[32] Average per capita GDP growth was about –1% during 1962-71.

[33] We say "partial" stability because control over inflation has not prevented Senegal (and its CFA partners) from running budget and balance of payments deficits driving its foreign debt to unsustainable levels.

[34] Interview with one of the authors (Gray) in April 1997.

force, its progress closely monitored, that would mobilize the shoemakers, a bank or two, and appropriate marketing channels? Persons more knowledgeable about Senegal than the authors assure us that such a scenario does not correspond to the perceptions, priorities or *modus operandi* of president Diouf.[35]

Among ex-British colonies that, for most of their post-independence history, have squandered opportunities for respectable economic performance, ***Tanzania*** is among the front-runners. Its strongest card was the charisma and integrity of Julius Nyerere, who even now helps to ensure political harmony in one of Africa's most tribally heterogeneous societies, and has played a constructive role in Uganda and Rwanda. Sadly, his *ujamaa* ideology was an economic disaster, ushering in a variant of statism that pushed rent-seeking into every corner of national life other than his *persona*, and denied the masses of agricultural export producers a fair return on their labors.

Measures to enhance Tanzania's competitiveness in both agricultural and industrial export markets—most notably, devaluation and eventually floating of the exchange rate—were a key component in the structural adjustment program that the IFIs ultimately convinced Nyerere's successors to adopt. Yet, since 1985 manufacturing output has grown at only 2.7 percent per annum, and in 1997 manufactures comprised only 9.4 percent of total exports. Hence, there is an obvious need for measures to attract foreign investment and expand these exports.

According to a senior government official quoted in Bloom and Sachs (1999), a Korean apparel firm seeking to expand its exports to the US from a site not subject to US import quotas, established a plant in Tanzania.[36] However, it lost its principal US customer due to delays in shipping caused by "obstruction and hassles by port and customs authorities."

Once again, the issue of national leadership arises: if President Mkapa were convinced of the importance of getting Tanzania aboard the manufactured export bandwagon, could he not start by establishing and monitoring a task force that would smooth the way for nontraditional exports through the port of Dar es Salaam?

Towards a clearly defined, manageable policy agenda for African leaders

Undoubtedly most African chief executives are aware of East Asian role models and would be delighted if history were to credit them with inaugurating their country's path to industrialization. However, they perceive such a plethora of hurdles, both domestic and foreign—the latter including 'dumping' by Asian competitors, as well as industrial country import quotas—that they don't know where to start, and end up doing little beyond paying lip service to the need to industrialize and export.

What do we suggest a "visionary" African leader might do to promote policies that will accelerate his/her country's growth? In the first place, he/she has to eschew the personal rent-seeking that is now ubiquitous. He/she has to recognize that the example set by a corrupt chief

[35] Conversely, president Diouf responds to threats to regional security with great speed and efficiency—cf. military interventions conducted on short notice in The Gambia (1981) and Guinea-Bissau (1998).
[36] Bloom and Sachs (1999), page 270, footnote 90.

executive permeates all branches and layers of government, from top to bottom in the executive, legislature and judiciary, and undermines growth by engendering FHK's "capricious interference" with private activity. Documented examples from Africa are too numerous to cite.

Deleterious rent-seeking in Africa is not limited to raiding the treasury or central bank or shaking down contractors. Taking control of the estates being vacated by colonial owners, founder-president Hastings Banda and his associates in Malawi's political elite lost interest in an agricultural policy oriented towards the rural masses.

In suggesting restraint, we are not trying to impose the spartan (and unattainable) condition that a chief executive or minister limit his/her compensation to the nominal salary that most African politicians feel can safely be listed in a published budget. Obviously, additional compensation in cash and kind will be channeled through nominally unrelated appropriations. It is when a leader draws rents exceeding a reasonable estimate of the opportunity cost of his/her time and effort that the title "visionary" becomes inappropriate.[37]

Unfortunately the converse to this rule does not hold—that is, the perceived honesty of a chief executive is no guarantee against a society being permeated with corruption. The leading case is Nyerere, who showed that imposition of an ideology tantamount to statism can institutionalize rent-seeking in a country that gained independence with a fair chance of keeping it in check.[38]

Secondly, the leader has to perceive the need for his/her country eventually to comply with the eight conditions cited by FHK. As they admit, this is a long agenda, and in the short run no African country will satisfy most of the policy conditions of today's NICs. Moreover, as regards the governance condition, not all the countries qualifying as NICs represent attractive models, even if expansion of the middle class, concomitant with rapid growth, has spurred institutional development and government accountability in several Asian and Latin American countries.

Some readers will accuse us of the narrow-minded view that "visionary" leadership in Africa is tantamount to adherence to IMF, World Bank and other donor conditionalities. Our answer: let these readers point to any low-income country that has sustained rapid growth of per capita GDP without making significant progress on most of FHK's eight conditions, or where fulfillment of some other condition (apart from the obvious restoration of law and order) has proven to be more important than those on the list. Furthermore, there is no need to adjust within the explicit framework of an IMF/Bank program. Indeed, resultant growth is likely to be faster and less subject to interruption if a government has the discipline to promote adjustment without Bretton Woods support.

While trying to foster institutional checks and balances that will eventually reduce opportunities for large-scale plunder, in the short run a visionary African leader can accomplish much by getting a few things right—a realistic exchange rate, moderate inflation, minimal levies

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[37] Cf. Klitgaard (1988) on the "optimal degree of corruption".

[38] Transparency International's 1998 Corruption Perceptions Index for 85 countries accords Tanzania the same score as Nigeria, in a tie for 4th-5th from the bottom.

on agriculture—and then focusing on a handful of activities that will respond quickly to his/her intervention.[39]

So the question is: what are these activities, and what concrete steps by the leader will have a growth impact in the short run? Our answer was anticipated by the preceding country anecdotes. The first priority is to get started on labor-intensive manufactured exports.[40] Here a "visionary" leader can and will pull the available levers in the bureaucracy and civil society to counter "capricious interference", convince foreign and domestic investors of the priority that he/she attaches to promoting exports, and satisfy them that his/her country offers a profitable environment in which to produce and sell. Since a single act of support will rarely suffice, the leader must monitor the situation and be prepared to sustain his/her intervention as long as necessary to create a stable and secure environment for investment.

A caution

We do not wish to be interpreted as saying that, to qualify as "visionary", an African chief executive must busy him- or herself pursuing every instance where a businessman (or woman) calls the president's office to complain about a brush with the bureaucracy. In the excitement of early days in office, some leaders have tried to do this, and there are no cases where a sustained increase in investment, output and exports can be attributed to such behavior. Indeed the effect can be perverse if the leader develops personal attachments and dislikes that bias government's posture. At the same time, his/her attention is diverted from weightier issues of political and macroeconomic stability.

What we are saying is that a "visionary" leader will identify transactions that are strategic from the viewpoint of establishing an enabling environment for agricultural expansion and manufactured exports, will ensure that he or she is informed speedily of blockages, and will intervene rapidly and firmly to overcome them. This in turn presupposes establishment and support of a modest organization that will monitor strategic areas, alert the leader to problems, help design corrective measures, and follow up on their implementation. Such a structure might be as modest as an export facilitation task force.

IV. Preconditions for emergence of new "visionary" leaders in Africa

If the quality of top leadership has been a serious impediment to policy reform and accelerated growth in Africa, what are the chances of significant improvement in the foreseeable future?

Strong, "visionary" leaders do not emerge like Venus from the sea, in Africa or anywhere else. All leaders, from "visionary" types down to the most venal kleptocrats, are products of

[39] Establishing an enabling environment for agriculture is one of the *sine qua nons* of growth policy. Succumbing to an urban bias against agriculture, African governments have burdened the sector to the point where food imports absorb roughly 15% of export revenue. Following the Asian example, a revitalized agricultural sector, absorbing the output of, and supplying inputs to, other sectors, can stimulate overall growth.

[40] This is not meant to exclude agricultural enterprises that are helping several African countries open new export markets, notably horticulture.

social structures, i.e. organizations and networks. What needs to be done so that African social structures will identify and promote leaders who will entrench reforms and accelerate their countries' growth?

As economists we challenge our social science colleagues—sociologists, anthropologists, political scientists—to help answer this question. The literature on leadership is rich. (See the Annex.) Most conceivable scenarios have been thoroughly explored. The difficulty has arisen in translating the analysis into practice.

Several of our reviewers have cited situations in which mismanagement and predation by national leaders have stimulated the formation of broad coalitions that have risen up in frustration and outrage to "throw the rascals out"—cf. Ghana in the late 1970s, Zambia in 1990, Madagascar in 1991. But in many countries such uprisings are long overdue. Nigeria is a dynamic society, yet had not Gen. Abacha succumbed to a heart attack, one wonders how long it would have taken his suffering people to overthrow him. The recent events in Niger show that leaders can be overthrown. Whether this will improve leadership or simply provoke another round of violence is yet to be determined. Historically, most of the successful popular coalitions have been too short-lived to create a power base for "visionary" individuals.

How (if at all) can outsiders contribute?

This is a difficult question. Overt encouragement, by outsiders, of leaders identified as "visionary" exposes them to attack by xenophobes and/or anti-reform interests, and risks lessening any chance they might have had to affect policy.

*In cases of corrupt, non-"visionary" leadership, (i) withholding support…*The first rule is, obviously, to refrain from encouraging leaders who epitomize anti-growth policies and behavior. A recent World Bank study of 56 aid-receiving countries in five developing regions (Burnside and Dollar (BD), 1997) found that, over the period 1970-93, donors' strategic interests significantly influenced the allocation of aid, biasing flows in the direction of client countries irrespective of the quality of their economic policies. Moreover, the aid enhanced the longevity of these countries' leaders, and long-term incumbents were resistant to economic reform.

The role of leaders with military backgrounds, demonstrated by Table 1, has certainly been enhanced by the provision of military aid. Indeed, any fungible component of aid has likely led, if only indirectly, to increasing the resources at the military's disposal in order to seize and retain power.

Another BD finding is that, in countries with poor policies, aid has not accelerated economic growth, whereas in low-income countries with good policies, aid has increased the per capita GDP growth rate by roughly one-third.[41]

Africa accounts for 21 of BD's 56 countries, and half their subset of 40 low-income countries.[42] The measure of donor interests is crude, assigning dummy variables to four

[41] BD (1997), p. 31.
[42] Only Gabon, with its oil, ranks as middle-income.

countries/country groups, namely (1) Sub-Saharan Africa as a whole, perceived as a focus of European strategic interest, (2) the franc zone (French interest), and two objects of US interest, namely (3) Central America and (4) Egypt. The dummy variable for Africa turns out to be insignificant.

A more disaggregated study valuing donor strategic interests in Africa country-by-country would likely find the relevant variable significant. The cold war helped leaders such as Kaunda, Mobutu, Moi, Mugabe, and Siad Barre to attract a disproportionate share of aid, notwithstanding poor policy regimes, and strengthen their hold on power by playing geopolitics.

Even if the greatest of the African kleptocrats, Mobutu, is no longer around, there are still many lesser Mobutus. To be sure, with too few viable alternatives as yet emerging from indigenous social structures, donors cannot avoid asking themselves: if we withhold support from kleptocrat X, what is the likelihood of his or her being replaced by leadership of even lower quality, or by a situation of quasi-anarchy with virtually no leadership at all (cf. Sierra Leone).

…supplemented by (ii) pro-active opposition. Out of diplomatic nicety, the Bretton Woods institutions, one quarter of whose members are African governments, have been reluctant to threaten the positions of corrupt national leaders by publicizing evidence of corruption to which their staffs have access, and imposing related conditionalities. The non-government organization Transparency International (TI), currently the main international voice against macro corruption in low-income countries, was established by ex-World Bank officials frustrated by the obstacles that staff lawyers posed to an active Bank posture in this area.[43]

The World Bank and IMF have recently been somewhat more forthcoming. Examples, featuring collaboration with once equally timid bilateral donors, include the ultimatum over Zambian cabinet ministers, and insistence on legal action by Kenya against the Goldenberg perpetrators. In our view, donor support of TI and similar private initiatives could and should be carried further. The ending of the cold war has freed up intelligence assets that could help uncover and expose the best hidden and yet most important class of data, namely, transfer of bribery proceeds to numbered bank accounts and illicit acquisition of other foreign assets.

Helping "visionary" leaders implement reforms

The relevance here of BD's study depends on the extent to which an African country's pursuit of good policies overlaps with "visionary" leadership. BD's policy index has three components:

1. The Sachs-Warner dummy variable for *trade openness*, where an "open" economy's average tariffs on machinery and materials are 40% or less, the black market exchange rate premium does not exceed 20%, and pervasive government control of key tradables is absent;
2. The level of inflation is a proxy for *monetary policy*; and
3. Quality of *fiscal policy* is measured by the budget surplus and government consumption, both relative to GDP ("good" policy is defined as one standard

[43] Account of Peter Eigen, TI president, at HIID seminar, Nov. 12, 1998.

deviation away from the sample mean—towards a positive surplus and lower government consumption).

A World Bank paper (WB 1998c) serving as background to BD (1997) uses the term "sound economic management" interchangeably with "good policies". "Management" has a greater connotation of "leadership" than does "policy". In a society with strong institutions and a broad consensus regarding economic policy, "visionary" leadership by a president (or other senior official or small group of officials delegated by the chief executive) is less vital for achieving respectable economic performance. One need look only as far as the US—not all recent presidents could be characterized as "visionary" leaders.

On the other hand, African countries are not yet characterized by strong national institutions and broad policy consensus. Hence "visionary" leadership by a single individual with political power, or a small coterie to whom he/she delegates power, is critical to institutional development as well as to adopting and sustaining policies that will accelerate an African country's economic growth. So we return to the question: how best can outsiders encourage such leadership?

One way is to help the leader formulate and implement his/her policies, once he/she has assumed power. WB (1998b) summarizes the record here. Donors have long provided aid subject to policy conditionalities—structural adjustment lending (and grants) that started around 1980 embodies this approach. Sachs (1994) cites eight countries (none of them in Africa, to be sure) where aid was a critical input in the reform process, helping "good governments to survive long enough to solve problems." By contrast, Rodrik (1996) argues that just as many cases can be cited of countries where aid enabled governments to delay reforms that impending economic collapse would otherwise have forced on them.

This divergence in country experiences poses an interesting dichotomy in regard to the connection between aid giving and "visionary" leadership in Africa. On the one hand, a case can be made for awarding the title of "most visionary leader of all" to one who believes traditional public foreign aid has impeded his/her country's development by creating a dependency relationship detrimental to adoption of pro-growth policies, as well as to mobilization of domestic talent and resources. Such a leader will be more inclined to devise an aid/debt "exit" strategy than to persuade donors to augment the aid flow. He/she will be more interested in foreign direct investment than official development assistance (ODA).

In the event such leaders appear in Africa, the outside world can be most supportive by helping design the strategy and arranging the resource flows needed to provide breathing space. Above and beyond this, outsiders can engage in dialogue with the majority of leaders regarding the merits of adopting and pursuing an aid/debt exit strategy.

At the same time, we do not begrudge the title of "visionary" to a leader who believes the selective and efficient use of ODA can accelerate a healthy growth process by underwriting a larger human and physical capital stock than could otherwise be supported. Such a leader will devise and pursue a strategy to attract aid, which includes, among other things, pursuing reforms consistent with broad donor conditionalities.[44]

Another requirement for making outside support for reform effective is to phase disbursements under an aid instrument—notably the quick-disbursing variety comprising budget or balance of payments support—such that fulfillment of conditionalities can be assessed frequently and disbursements withheld if reforms are not implemented adequately. This has two advantages: firstly, it strengthens the hand of reform-minded leaders in implementing reforms over local opposition, secondly, it saves the donor money if it turns out the country leaders are not serious about reform.

Sachs (1994) also argues, again from non-African examples, that reform programs that succeeded in accelerating growth, whether or not supported by aid, have generated political momentum prolonging the lives of several "good" governments. Moreover, in institutional environments stronger than those found in most of Africa, success has imparted irreversibility to reform, so that formerly anti-reform leaders have ended up sustaining the reforms once they came to power. Thus, insofar as aid contributed to reform's success, it has helped make "visionary" leaders out of politicians formerly beholden to anti-reform interest groups.

Helping "visionary" leaders gain power

Can outsiders increase the chances of "visionary" leaders taking power in the first place? In theory, if donors withhold aid from the corrupt, non-"visionary" leaders so prevalent in Africa today, the resulting disruption to the economy makes it more difficult for such individuals to remain in power, whether they are voted out in a system that permits relatively free elections, or forced out in a *coup d'état* or popular uprising. In practice, things often do not work out this way; witness the many disappointing leaders who manage to hang on to power notwithstanding persistent economic crisis—even, in Kenya and Zambia, following restoration of multi-party electoral competition under donor pressure, and specifically in Zambia's case, despite the removal of the failed chief executive.

Arriving at a perception that "visionary" opposition leaders are likely to attract greater aid and thereby, as well as in other ways, improve economic performance, a well-informed public should award those leaders more votes, or take greater risks to support them in an uprising. But not many electorates in Africa (or in most other developing countries, for that matter) can yet be described as well informed in the sense of anticipating the eventual gains from liberalization and other components of economic reform. Moreover, after years of sustained economic failure, most African populations are risk-averse, as is evident in the variety of "coping" strategies widely used to raise the prospects of economic survival.

WB (1998b) gives four rules of thumb for effective donor intervention "under difficult conditions", apart from (and sometimes as a substitute for) financial transfers. All of these imply support for "visionary" leaders, short of holding a press conference where a panel of donor

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[44] It is often overlooked that, as economic performance improves, the relevance and impact of donor conditionalities diminish.

representatives calls on Country A's public to replace the current leadership with individuals X, Y and Z.

1. "*Find a champion*…there are likely to be reform-minded elements in the community and even in the government. If aid can find and support these reformers, it can have a big impact."
2. "*Have a long-term vision of systemic change*."
3. "*Support knowledge creation*… Reformers often need to develop the details of reform through innovation and evaluation... For reform to take root requires a demonstration that it works." Aid should finance and evaluate innovations.
4. "*Engage civil society*. In highly distorted environments the government is failing to provide supportive policies and effective services… Support civil society to pressure the government to change or to take service provision directly into its own hands…"[45]

Once more out of diplomatic nicety, the World Bank is excluded from publishing names and other particulars of situations in which the Bank and other donors have applied such measures and thereby succeeded in dislodging corrupt, non-"visionary" leaders. Suffice it to refer back to our earlier Table 1, which suggests that progress has been slow. Moreover, included in the table are a number of one-time opposition leaders who switched once they took power. Like aid, honesty, integrity and commitment are fungible. Fomenting change is an imprecise and precarious activity.

The long run—human capital formation and institution building

It is an article of faith in the development community that increased investment in education will generate a more enlightened electorate and strengthen a country's institutions of governance, along with the capacity of its socio-political structures to produce strong, "visionary" leaders. This notwithstanding the fact that estimates of the internal rate of return of educational expenditure in Africa, based on differential earnings during graduates' working lives, have tended to decline over time. Thus, to the extent donors invest in education in Africa, they are incidentally helping to build leadership capacity in the long run.

Some observers, including many associated with United Nations agencies other than the Bretton Woods institutions, argue that education has suffered under donor-funded structural adjustment programs obliging governments to curtail budget deficits. This is contradicted by a recent IMF study, which reports that African countries participating in ESAF and HIPC programs recorded an average 1.0 percent per annum increase in real per capita education spending since the year preceding the respective programs, during the period 1986-97. Education indicators also improved modestly in African program countries, illiteracy declining by 2.8 percent per annum, gross primary school enrollment rising by 0.1 percent per annum and secondary enrollment by 0.6 percent per annum.[46]

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[45] WB (1998b), p. 104.

[46] IMF (1999), p. 79. ESAF = Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility, HIPC = Highly Indebted Poor Countries. The corresponding rate of increase for all program countries, including Africa, was 2.5%. The recorded average annual growth of real per capita health spending was 4.1% in Africa, 2.6% in all program countries.

Whatever the weight of the evidence, the authors are convinced that the majority of African governments undertaking structural adjustment would soon have found themselves with less real resources to use in all sectors, including education, had they failed to deal with fiscal and international payments imbalances.

V. Conclusion

The main issue addressed in this paper is whether the quality of national leadership is relevant to evaluating the progress of African countries towards sustained economic growth. We inquire whether it is conceivable (i) that “visionary” leaders, comparable to individuals who helped launch economic growth in other regions, could have appeared in Africa in the past, have appeared recently, or may be expected to appear in the foreseeable future, even if only randomly and in very small numbers. And (ii), once having appeared, whether they could have made pro-growth policies difficult to reverse (or will do so in future), giving domestic and foreign investors the necessary confidence to expand productive capacity, create jobs, produce competitively and export.

If not, then analysis of leadership as a distinct factor cannot contribute to understanding and prediction about Africa’s growth prospects. Instead, we should stick to interest-group analysis, asking in what circumstances “gainers” from liberalization and policy reform more generally will acquire the political power necessary to institutionalize those processes.

Few, if any social phenomena are adequately explained by a single hypothesis. So also the policy failings underlying Africa’s poor economic performance are fully explained neither by the shortcomings of leadership alone, nor solely by interest group dynamics. In a society with fragile institutions and unstable coalitions of interests, a strong, visionary leader has the potential to mold the coalitions in order to implement policies that, in promoting growth, will maximize any reasonable social welfare function.

Ceteris paribus, the greater the power and stability of the interest groups anticipating harm from market-oriented reforms, the harder it is for the leader to assert him or herself. Conversely, the stronger and more visionary the leader, the better he/she will be able to manipulate and compensate the groups, while nurturing budding interest groups that anticipate net benefits from the reforms.

Our research leads us to believe that a large number, possibly most African countries have been ruled by leaders who had sufficient power to implement reforms had they been motivated to do so. However, their motivation led them in different directions. As a result, policy reforms have been implemented haltingly, with frequent reversals. In a sense, this outcome represents the triumph of groups “interest”ed only in aggrandizement and the appeasement of their hangers-on—family members, friends, and associates whose political support is bought by sharing the loot.

To the extent that this is true, it follows that:

- shortcomings of national leadership in economic policy represent a highly relevant issue in Africa;

- the relative dearth of pro-growth leaders has been and continues to be extremely costly to the populations of most African countries; and
- this dearth is an issue meriting research that goes beyond traditional interest-group analysis.

The key question that we find demanding research: is there anything specific to the current African socio-political environment that retards the emergence of leaders with qualities such as those identified with Harberger's "heroes" or others cited in our literature review?

We have argued that outsiders, notably donors, exercise variable influence over the settings that nurture "visionary" leaders. So far, this influence has proven to be asymmetrical, in the sense that donors have contributed much more to helping corrupt, non-"visionary" leaders hold on to power, than they have contributed to nurturing "visionary" pro-growth leaders.

As long as the World Bank's concept of "a long-term vision of systemic change" can be interpreted to encompass preparation of an aid/debt exit strategy, we believe the Bank's rules of thumb for effective donor intervention in support of growth policy can do double duty as guidelines for outside nurturing of "visionary" leaders in Africa. Nevertheless, experience cautions against optimism that the guidelines will yield quick results.

In addition to nurturing from outside, one must hope that Africa's evolving social structures—organizations and networks—will provide opportunities for more "visionary" individuals with the power to assert themselves over incumbent leaders. It may also not be amiss to hope that outright luck will favor the random appearance of a few more strong, "visionary" leaders than have recently graced the landscape.

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ANNEX: LEADERSHIP, A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Leadership is not easily defined or described[i]. Moreover, the definitions and descriptions have changed over time.

In the scriptures, we read[ii]:

> If the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself for battle? [1 Corinthians XIV, 8], and:
>
> If the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. [Mathew XV, 14]

Tacitus in his *History* noted that "reason and judgement are the qualities of a leader". A study of Shakespeare is revealing. One of the history's most enduring images of a treacherous leader is in *Hamlet* (3.2.14): "It out-Herods Herod". The emptiness of failed leadership applies to Macbeth (5.2.19-20): "Those he commands move only in command, Nothing in love"[iii].

Such a complex issue can lead to contradictions. Theodore Roosevelt noted that[iv] "the leader works in the open and the boss in covert". By contrast, the Chinese scholar, Laotzu stated[v]:

> A leader is best
> When people barely know that he exists.

Closer to the present, Chester Barnard argued that leadership[vi]:

> ... refers to the quality of the behavior of the individuals whereby they guide people or their activities in organized effort.

Modern treatments have moved away from the characteristics of leaders and their behavior. Emphasis shifted to the various "situations" or "contexts" within which leadership is exercised[vii]. There have also been explicit efforts to reverse gender bias evident in earlier discussions of leadership[viii].

Although, he was not the first to make this shift, the following definition by McGregor Burns is typical[ix]:

> *Leadership over human beings is exercised when persons with certain motives and purposes mobilize, in competition or conflict with others, institutional, political, psychological, and other resources so as to arouse, engage and satisfy the motives of the followers.* (Italics in original.)

In McGregor Burns' view, "...leaders are a particular kind of power holder". For de Vries, however, the basic issue was effective leadership. This, he noted "... strongly depends on a complex pattern of interaction among leaders, followers, and situation"[x]. He argued that "effective leaders are very good at building alliances and creating commitment so that others will share their vision”[xi]. This approach allowed de Vries to identify and examine situations when leadership goes awry. He was particularly interested in the pathologies and irrationality that characterize poorly functioning, or (as he termed them) “neurotic” organizations[xii].

The management literature has made a clear distinction between managers and leaders. On this point, Zaleznik noted[xiii]:

> ... a crucial difference between managers and leaders lies in the conceptions they hold, deep in their psyches, of chaos and order. Leaders tolerate chaos and lack of structure and are thus prepared to keep answers in suspense, avoiding premature closure on important issues. Managers seek order and controls and are almost compulsively addicted to disposing of problems even before they understand their potential significance.

Kotter’s discussion of “what leaders really do” has a similar theme[xiv]:

> Management is about coping with complexity... Leadership, by contrast, is about coping with change.

Expert opinion diverges on whether leadership can be learned or is “instinctive”. Drucker was adamant:

> Leadership is of utmost importance. Indeed there is no substitute for it. But leadership cannot be created or promoted. It cannot be taught or learned[xv].

Some who share Drucker’s view emphasize the “artistry” in leadership. They see leaders as having special qualities and faculties that are not easily transferred or not readily acquired[xvi].

Other management specialists disagree. For example, Zaleznik, provided numerous examples of how leaders have been nurtured and supported within large organizations. He noted that all military leaders emerge from within the system.[xvii]

Heifetz and Laurie were more direct. They argue that:

> Leadership has to take place every day. It cannot be the responsibility of the few, a rare event, or a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity[xviii].

They continue:

> Leadership, ..., requires a learning strategy. A leader, ..., has to engage people in confronting the challenge, adjusting their values, changing perspectives, and learning new habits[xix].

In their opinion, leaders learn as they encourage others. This is part of the challenge of being or becoming a leader. Those who do not learn, as they challenge others, fail. Indeed, the point is more general. The essence of reform is that the people involved and the systems they are part of undergo fundamental change. Reformers are those who are willing to change their perceptions and presumptions in order to adapt to the changing reality[xx].

This sentiment was captured in Walter Lippman's tribute to Franklin Roosevelt[xxi]:

> The final test of a leader is that he leaves behind him in other men the conviction and the will to carry on.

Leaders in Africa: Where in Africa are the men who have left such a legacy over the last four decades?[xxii] Leopold Senghor was one of the few heads of state who understood that a fundamental requirement of good leadership is the ability to hand over power[xxiii]. General Olusegun Obasanjo did the same in Nigeria. In doing so, he provided that country with the opportunity (later squandered) to move beyond military dictatorship. Perhaps his recent election will allow that troubled nation to move forward.[xxiv] Sir Quett Ketumile Masire recently retired in Botswana after a career in which his country, democratic and peaceful, prospered as no other African country has. Finally, Nelson Mandela moves towards retirement having demonstrated, through the strength of his character and generosity of his spirit, that a "New" South Africa could become a reality.

Beyond these few, the ranks thin out rapidly. Indeed, the legacy of the various dreamers, thugs, and kleptocrats who have charmed, tyrannized, and pillaged populations across Africa over the last four decades, has been economic collapse.[xxv] Their failed leadership is evident in the "neurotic organizations" and those who have been left behind who operate within them. Rather than rebuild and re-direct the shattered economies and societies, their successors have added to the mayhem.

Endnotes to the Annex

[i] This is evident in the works of McGregor Burns (1978) and Rosen (1996) and the collection of essays on leadership assembled by Grint (1997) and the *Harvard Business Review* (1998). A similar point is made by Kets de Vries (1994), reprinted in Grint (1997), when he referred to *Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership* (Bass 1981) with its 5000 references on the topic.

[ii] The following quotes may be found in Mencken *A New Dictionary of Quotations* 1942, p.670.

[iii] Hill and Ottchen 1991, pp.65, 152

[iv] Mencken *op cit.*, p.121.

[v] Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations 13th Edn.*, p. 912

[vi] Barnard (1948) *Organization and Management* in Grint (1997, p.91).

[vii] Fielder 1978

[viii] See the contributions by Bass and Avolio (1994), Rosener (1995), and Calas and Smircich (1991), respectively, chapters 10, 11, and 17 in Grint (1997).

[ix] McGregor Burns 1978, p.18

[x] Kets de Vries 1994, reprinted in Grint (1997, p.251).

[xi] Kets de Vries 1994, reprinted in Grint (1997, p.252).

[xii] Kets de Vries *op. cit.*, pp.268-269. In a passage which is relevant to the problems encountered in Africa, Kets de Vries stated (p.270):

> For leaders who are caught up in a web of irrationality at the head of a neurotic organization, escape is not easy. In most cases, they cannot break out of their self-constructed prison alone. They are the captives of their character and they will need some kind of professional help to break the chains that restrict their behavior and lead to dysfunctional organizations. Leaders must recognize the potential destructiveness of their actions, and understand the extent to which past experiences can influence their present and future behavior. ... These people make the same mistakes over and over again because they are unable to recognize certain repetitive patterns in their behavior which have become dysfunctional.

[xiii] Zaleznik 1977, reprinted in *Harvard Business Review on Leadership* 1998, p.87

[xiv] Kotter 1990. Reprinted in *Harvard Business Review on Leadership* 1998, p.37

[xv] Drucker 1982:194

[xvi] The leader most often associated with this idea is Napoleon. Yet, while it is easy to see the boldness, spontaneity, and intuition in what he accomplished, the comparison between Napoleon and Wellington offers a stark contrast in "leadership styles" (Pears in Grint 1997:Ch.12).

[xvii] Argyris (1991) makes the case that not only can an organization's top staff be taught, they have to be if the organization is to continue to thrive.

[xviii] Heifetz and Laurie 1998, p.196

[xix] Heifetz and Laurie 1998, p.197

[xx] It is common to hear that leaders are also revolutionary. Lamb (1987) was careful to make the distinction between the two. He noted (p.70):

> ... carrying a gun does not make a revolutionary. Nor does repeating rhetoric. Nor does overthrowing a government. To be a revolutionary one must have a vision of the future and a plan to effect fundamental changes. Few African presidents have.

[xxi] Walter Lippmann *Roosevelt Has Gone* 14th April 1945. Quoted in Barlett's Familiar Quotations 14th Edn.,p. 1013a

[xxii] The importance of leadership has been well understood (Mwaipaya 1980; Sandbrook 1986; Jackson and Rosberg 1994).

[xxiii] One explanation of why so few leaders have handed over power is lack of security. As Lamb (1987, p.58) pointed out:

> The pity of contemporary Africa is that few presidents are secure enough to pursue policies or experiments with systems that might diminish their own power. And fewer still have displayed benevolence or wisdom in carrying out the affairs of state. The result is that many countries are run by men who are little more than clerks with guns.

[xxiv] The failure of leadership in Nigeria has been a regular theme of Nigerian writers (Achebe 1983; Soyinka 1996).

[xxv] Frimpong-Ansah (1991) and Ayittey (1992, 1998) make a strong case that the failure of leadership has been central to Africa's disorder and decline.